

# Human Services

## Needs Assessment: 2016-2018



**City of Lynnwood**  
**Community Development Department**  
**[www.lynnwoodwa.gov](http://www.lynnwoodwa.gov)**





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## Executive Summary


The City of Lynnwood will be publishing a Needs Update every two years. The purpose of this update will be to document the human services needs of people in our community and to report trends that we see that are impacting our city. This year, the City of Lynnwood prepared its first Needs Assessment. To do this task, we utilized existing and current data, reports, and resources from outside agencies, service providers and different levels of government to compile the City of Lynnwood 2016-2018 Needs Assessment. We anticipate that in future updates, City staff will have the capacity to rely more heavily on locally generated data sources.

The City of Lynnwood's Community Vision states that as a city, we wish to be a regional model for a community that has engaged citizens and an accountable government. In order to take care of our community and respond to the needs of Lynnwood residents, it is crucial to understand what people need in the present and what people might need in the future.

Needs change over time. One of the primary duties of the City of Lynnwood's Human Services Commission is to conduct studies on emerging issues and trends and to provide the public with opportunities to inform City staff and our commission on

what those needs are. One example of data collection used in preparing this report is community conversations. This is a technique utilized by both City staff and the Human Service Commissioners to attend regular meetings that are already being held in the community and gather information about needs from people "on their turf" in order to gain a nontraditional viewpoint of what human services needs are for the underrepresented and underserved segments of our population. This qualitative data helps supplement the more traditional statistics that are readily available on websites, reports, and from external agencies. We know that there are many people in our community that have financial, physical and emotional needs that sometimes are compounded by other issues such as homelessness, job loss, mental illness and family crisis. We also know that these are our neighbors and that these are both individuals and families that are impacted. Through this report, one of our objectives is to bring forth an understanding of the broad scope of needs, but also a local context of human services needs and with that information we hope to inspire action that will continue to move us forward in removing barriers to achieving a high quality of life that every person in Lynnwood deserves as a human being.

For this report, information was gathered by convening community conversations and by asking the community to meet for



one-on-one interviews and through tours of their agencies. For example, what people said about what they see as human services needs of their specific group or population was documented. Information from the 2010 U.S. Census, the 2010-2012 American Community Survey, Snohomish County, United Way of Snohomish County, Goodwill Industries, Cocoon House, YWCA, the State Department of Veteran's Affairs, Verdant Health Commission, KWA, and other local and national public and nonprofit sources was also utilized. The result is a wealth of information of what Lynnwood is and what our needs are which allows us to understand what is happening and then take action.

### Key Issues for 2016-2018:

Five issues came up repeatedly in our research and in our conversations in the community.

(Note: these are not in priority order.)

- Basic Needs: Shelter, Food, Clothing
- Homelessness
- Substance Abuse
- Mental Illness
- Support for Veterans

This Executive Summary gives a broad overview and highlights each of these five key issues. There are other areas that need our attention, such as lack of affordable dental care, domestic violence, services for elderly persons and people with disabilities, and human trafficking. All of these are equally important and there are too many others to list in this summary.

Data shows that Lynnwood is continuing to become more and more diverse and is changing.

- Non-White residents make up almost 36% of the population in 2010. Lynnwood is more racially diverse than neighboring jurisdictions and the county overall. Lynnwood has the highest percentage of Asians (17%) and Latinos (13%) in the south County area.
- The population is growing older. According to the 2010 Census, 13.3% of Lynnwood residents were 65 or older. Lynnwood has a higher proportion of older adults compared to Snohomish County.
- Lynnwood's median income is approximately \$18,000 lower than Snohomish County. American Community Survey results show that the median household income is approximately \$49,000 for Lynnwood. Approximately half of Lynnwood's residents are renters. The poverty rate is higher for families with a female head of household, no husband present with children under 18 years old.
- Approximately 65% of Lynnwood residents speak a language other than English at home. Some of these languages are Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, Russian, Ukrainian and Arabic.



## Key Issues for 2016-2018

### Basic Needs: Shelter, Food, Clothing

The need for jobs that pay enough to meet the basic needs of our residents has been cited as the #1 community problem since the City's first Comprehensive Plan was completed. While the City of Lynnwood is an economic hub for Snohomish County, one of few cities where the jobs-housing balance tips in favor of jobs, its local median income is low - \$49,839 compared to \$68,338 for the County overall.

2015 Living Wage Lynnwood, WA	
Family Type	Living Wage
Single Adult	\$11.19/hr
Single Adult with one child	\$23.48/hr
Single Adult with two children	\$27.63/hr
Two Adults (one working) with two children	\$24.09/hr

Source: [Livingwage.mit.edu/counties](http://Livingwage.mit.edu/counties), 2016

Another indicator is the increases in rent that we are seeing for one- and two-bedroom apartments in Snohomish County. The reason rent increases are important factors is that when people begin to pay more than 30% of their household income for rent including utilities, by the definition of the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, they are considered cost-burdened. And when people pay more

than 50% of their household income for rent including utilities, they are considered severely cost burdened.

The minimum wage was \$9.47. This past November, voters approved a minimum wage increase to \$13.50 in Washington State. Under the measure, workers will receive the first pay jump, from the current \$9.47 to \$11 an hour, starting January 1, 2017. Higher paying jobs are important to Lynnwood residents in order for households to be able to meet their basic needs such as food and transportation.

Both renters and homeowners in Lynnwood are cost burdened, paying more than 30% of their household income for housing. This indicates that the cost of housing is not in proportion with what people earn. This significantly impacts people's ability to maintain a stable housing situation.

- 1 in 2 households are struggling in Lynnwood according to United Way of Snohomish County: Lynnwood Profile, 2013 data. 15.5% of all people live in poverty. For children, this figure jumps to 17.8%
- In total, nearly 6,500 Lynnwood households are struggling to make ends meet based on 2013 Census data.
- In 2015, the Foundation for Edmonds School District provided food to hundreds of homeless students in the Edmonds School District.

<b>Lynnwood Demographics</b>			
	<b>2010</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>Population</b>	35,836	35,960	36,030
<b>Renter Households</b>	46.20%	47.90%	48.50%
<b>Median Household Income (2015 dollars)</b>	\$52,443	\$51,149	\$50,968
<b>Households &lt;50% AMI</b>	44.20%	43.60%	43.80%
<b>Cost-Burdened Homeowners</b>	41%	35.80%	33.60%
<b>Cost-Burdened Renters</b>	55.80%	60.30%	58.20%

Source: AHA, 2016

### **What We Are Doing:**

- In 2012, the City of Lynnwood supported the creation of the Alliance for Housing Affordability (AHA) which is an inter-jurisdictional coordination between cities in Snohomish County. The purpose of AHA is to collectively address and collaborate on a common goal to facilitate the availability of housing that meets the needs of all income levels. One of the outcomes of this alliance is to foster efforts to provide affordable housing by encouraging funding of housing projects from any combination of public, nonprofit and private sector agreements. AHA is currently investigating models for regional funding for new affordable housing similar to ARCH programming in King County.


## **Homelessness**

Homelessness is a crisis. There is both chronic homelessness and short-term homelessness impacting families, youth, veterans and adults. The causes for homelessness in Snohomish County and in Lynnwood are different.

- We know that job loss has been the leading reported cause of homelessness in the county, but in Lynnwood the most reported cause of homelessness is domestic violence. The 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of homelessness in Lynnwood is tied between mental illness and substance abuse.
- Social workers tell us that these are not people coming to Lynnwood to be homeless, but these are people who were either born here in Lynnwood or grew up here.
- In the 2015-2016 school year, the Edmonds School District reported 455 homeless students, compared to 347 in 2014-2015, which is a 76% increase in families that are living in motels, doubled up on a sofa or living in a temporary shelter.

### **What We Are Doing:**

- In 2015, the City of Lynnwood awarded a contract to the YWCA to address homelessness in Lynnwood. The YWCA has hired a homeless engagement liaison to connect at least 20 homeless households per quarter with services, including



moving into stable housing. The YWCA is making some changes at the Pathways for Women Emergency Shelter to serve 13 units of emergency shelter and continue to provide 5 units of permanent affordable housing. The YWCA will be increasing the number of families served with this new structure. The City Council authorized a continuation of this program in 2017.

- Catholic Community Services and Snohomish County joined forces to provide supported housing to chronically homeless veterans with the new Filbert Road veterans apartments. This project was completed in 2016 and now provides 20 one-bedroom apartments and support services. CCS secured the funding - \$1.5 million from the state Housing Trust Fund and \$2.6 million from Snohomish County Human Services – and purchased the surplus land from Snohomish County. It was project that was four years in the making where CCS invited community housing providers, social service agencies and the City of Lynnwood to form a committee to address the critical issue of veteran’s homelessness.

## **Substance Abuse**

Another issue, is a troubling trend in an increase in the number of adults, children and youth who are presenting with substance abuse issues.

- Another indicator is the increase in calls to the Crisis Clinic’s 24-hour hotline for the area codes 98036, 98037, and 98087. Between 2012 and 2014, there was a 22% increase from Lynnwood callers. In 2015, 1,192 of all calls to North Sound 2-1-1 originated in Lynnwood.
- In community conversations so far, we heard from many providers, Edmonds District school staff, community members and Lynnwood Police that substance abuse is very much on the rise, in particular, heroin usage. Snohomish County data indicates that countywide, deaths from heroin have increased 101% between 2010 and 2014. Between 2013 and 2014, heroin deaths increased 58%.

## **What We Are Doing:**

- City staff are working with the YWCA’s homeless engagement liaison to interview and tour substance abuse service providers, like Evergreen Recovery Center in Lynnwood (opening in 2017) to better understand what is involved with substance abuse treatment, level of care and what barriers



currently exist for serving our community's needs.

## **Mental Illness**

Mental illness affects 1 in every 5 adults in the United States. Individuals with mental illness experience disruption in their ability to think clearly, feel and relate to others which often results in changes in daily functioning. Consequences of untreated mental illness can include short-term and long-term disability, unemployment, homelessness, disrupted family relationships and substance abuse.

- Suicide is the second-leading cause of death for Washington teens 15 to 19 years old. One indicator for assessing mental health issues for school aged children and youth is measuring suicide ideation. This question is asked every two years in the Healthy Youth Survey, a statewide survey of 8th, 10th, and 12th graders in school districts. In 2015, 16% of 8th, 10th, and 20% of 12th graders in the ESD said they contemplated suicide. In 2014, 64% of 12th graders in the ESD reported that they felt nervous and anxious and 50% of 12th graders stated in this survey that they were unable to stop or control worrying.
- Approximately 12% of older adults in Lynnwood are living with depression. Depression is the most prevalent mental health problem among older adults.


- Incarcerated individuals and the criminalization of mental illness is recognized as a nationwide problem.

## **What We Are Doing:**

- As of 2015, the City of Lynnwood's population is estimated to be approximately 38,000 people. Lynnwood is does not receive Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds because the population has not yet met the minimum threshold eligibility of 50,000 population. This limits our ability to get direct funding from the federal government for human services.

## **Support for Veterans**

- Veterans and those in active duty often experience higher rates of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and depression than the civilian population. In exploring the needs of our Lynnwood residents who served, the Human Services Commission has identified returning Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans and their families as a unique population whose needs are not being met. The clearest needs among returning veterans are for mental health services. Increasing access to mental health services is critical to a mentally healthy community.
- The journey home for each returning veteran is a uniquely individual experience that also impacts the family. Roughly 598,460 veterans reside in




Washington State, 60,000 active duty, 19,000 guard and reserve and 2,000,000 family members. Per conversations with the Veterans Service Officer at Snohomish County Human Services, from 2012 to 2015, they have seen a 62% increase in requests for services through their office. In South Snohomish County, 7% of the population in Brier, Lynnwood and Mountlake Terrace are veterans. The largest concentration of veterans is in Edmonds at 9% of the population.

- According to the National Center for PTSD, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) are signature injuries of the Global War on Terror (Operations Iraqi Freedom [OIF] and Enduring Freedom [OEF]). Veterans of other war eras continue to experience these invisible wounds and issues of readjustment and reintegration as related to homing experiences and the societal mindset of the time. It is estimated 11-20 % of OIF and OFE, and 12% of Gulf War Veterans experience PTSD in a given year and 30% of Vietnam Veterans have had PTSD in their lifetime. Among Veterans who use VA health care 23% of women report sexual assault, and 55% of women and 38% of men have experienced sexual harassment in the military. The Department of Defense and the Defense Veteran's Brain Injury Center estimate 22% of OIF/OEF combat casualties compared to 12% of Vietnam related

combat casualties involve a TBI. It is also estimated 60-80% of soldiers who have other blast injuries may also have TBIs. The risk for suicide increases for those who live with PTSD and TBI, with nationwide, 20 veterans a day who choose suicide as an option. While the Global War on Terror is on the wane the number of veterans who struggle with the cultural transition to civilian life, who live with invisible wounds, and who die by suicide continue. These issues collectively contribute to an increasing number of homeless veterans (ages 18-30, 9% and 31-50, 41%).

### **What We Are Doing:**

- The City's Veterans Initiative was created in 2015 to better serve veterans and their families. As a result of this initiative, the City implemented a 12-month pilot project for a "One-Stop Veterans Resource Center" housed in the Madrona Room at the Verdant Community Wellness Center in Lynnwood. Verdant provides free office space every Tuesday of the month and the first Wednesday of the month to Veterans Service Officers and others to assist veterans with connecting to service providers. Services included are assistance with employment, education and a connection with the resources of the State's Veterans



Affairs Department, including placement into subsidized housing for homeless veterans. In order to take care of our veterans, it typically requires the coordination and collaboration of at least seven agencies: the Department of Veteran Affairs, Catholic Community Services, Snohomish County Veterans, EMT program, Community Health Centers of Snohomish County and Verdant Health Commission.

- The City is also looking at leasing and upgrading an existing building to establish a veterans' museum. This building is centrally located directly across the street from City of Lynnwood's Veterans Park.

### Next Steps

- Our Needs Assessment will help us plan the best uses for City resources and be good stewards of these funds.
- **Human Services Commission.** Lynnwood's Human Services Commission will consider the top priorities identified in the Needs Assessment as it proceeds with its work in the upcoming year. We clearly understand that our investments must effectively meet real needs, many of which are an ongoing result of the economic downturn, must be planned and delivered using a "collective impact"

approach, show tangible results and leverage new resources to bring more services to Lynnwood.

- **Regional Efforts.** Human services needs reach beyond our city limits. With the creation of the new City of Lynnwood Human Services Commission, we are confident that we are leading others in South Snohomish County by taking the necessary steps to support existing relationships and to create new partnerships with service providers. It is important for the City of Lynnwood to work with other jurisdictions around the region to improve mental health services, preserve and maintain affordable housing, address homelessness, increase children's readiness for school, and to work together to address many other community issues.





## Methodology

### Public Involvement – Lynnwood Input on Human Services Needs

City staff used a number of different methods to obtain a comprehensive picture of human services needs and issues in Lynnwood. Beginning in 2015, staff met or talked with a diverse group of stakeholders who live, provide services and/or work in the City. Data used in the report comes from Community Conversations, key informant interviews and extensive review of reports and websites. Staff did not wish to recreate existing data that was already collected from recent Needs Assessment work completed by Verdant Health Commission and Snohomish County Human Services but instead to incorporate data specific to Lynnwood to include in this report. It was important for City staff to have conversations with groups or individuals that might be underrepresented in more traditional data gathering methods. It also should be noted that this is an ongoing process and that City staff expects that data included in this report will change every couple of years as needs change in our community. For example, another public involvement tool that City staff will be using to supplement and further define these needs may be pilot programs, such as the multi-departmental South Lynnwood Neighborhood Planning efforts.

The following section outlines the many ways community engagement was accomplished either through recent reports completed or Community Conversations and describes the organization of the report.

### Human Services Providers

- City staff made numerous phone calls from 2015 to 2016 to over thirty human service providers that serve Lynnwood residents. Questions that were asked during these conversations were about what services do they provide, what services do they wish they could do more of, what gaps and barriers are they experiencing right now. City staff also left the office and toured numerous human service providers to ask questions “on their turf” and gather information for this report. Some service providers located outside of the city limits, such as those located in Everett or Seattle were invited to city offices and City staff met with these providers to learn more about their services and how they might expand to serve Lynnwood residents in the future.

### Key Informant Interviews

- Approximately 15 to 20 groups and/or individuals were interviewed in person between October 2015 and May 2016. Key informant interviews provide insights into the needs and issues experienced by a particular population when other information is not available. Interviewees included service providers to or members of groups like:
  - Immigrants and refugees (for example, Korean women)
  - Older adults
  - Homeless individuals and families



## Key Informant Interviews with Faith Based Communities in Lynnwood

- Faith based communities in Lynnwood are an important piece of this work. City staff realizes that the faith based community provides a variety of basic need services that are rarely formally counted as community resources. One of the biggest issues that City staff has heard from the faith based community is family homelessness.

## City of Lynnwood Staff

- City staff also provided their observations of Lynnwood residents' human service needs. Staff represented a number of departments that have direct contact with Lynnwood residents, like Fire, Community Development, Parks, Police, and Public Works.

## Other Sources of Information

### *Reports, Studies and Websites*

- Many public and private organizations produce detailed reports focusing on specific topic areas like affordable housing, older adults and unemployment. Other agencies have prepared needs assessments that are applicable to Lynnwood. Examples of those referenced in this report include the following:
- Snohomish County 2015 Low Income Community Needs Assessment (March 2016)
- Verdant Health Commission Community Health and Wellness Assessment (July 2013)

- Snohomish County Community Needs Assessment: Focus Group Responses Related to First Responders for Lynnwood (December 2015)
- AARP Public Policy Review
- Lynnwood Police Department data, including incident reports by area
- North Sound 2-1-1 data for Lynnwood zip codes


### *Data Limitations*

The data in the Needs Assessment came from reliable sources. However, as in all reports that were created and in this task, City staff created a report with in-house staff only. Due to existing workloads, this limits the ability to conduct phone surveys to increase public input. However, City staff made efforts to compensate for this issue by incorporating data collected from the YWCA. The YWCA was awarded a grant to address homelessness in 2015. As part of this grant, one of the deliverables was to conduct a survey in both Spanish and English. The results of the YWCA survey are provided in Appendix B.

Other issues affecting data quality or quantity:

- Lack of access to underrepresented groups, such as those who are disabled, those who speak languages other than English, or the frail elderly
- Underreporting of certain topics given their personal nature, such as income or sensitive issues like rape and domestic violence, human trafficking



- 
- Inability to obtain unduplicated counts of certain populations, such as homeless families, who are difficult to count because they are mobile and in transition
  - Changes in data collection and reporting methodologies



## Lynnwood: A Community Profile

### Population and Growth

Population is the most basic demographic measure that communities utilize to plan for growth and future needs in an effective way. Population dynamics profoundly affect and are affected by every aspect of our human culture and society, including household and family formation, health care and longevity, immigration, education, land use, environment, transportation systems, the economy, and governmental policies. The following data are from the U.S. Census Bureau's 1990, 2000 and 2010 decennial censuses as well as the 2007-2011 and 2012 American Community Surveys; population data is included from Washington State's Office of Financial Management (OFM).

### The American Community Survey

The U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) replaced the decennial census long form for gathering detailed information about population and household characteristics essential for federal programs. The major benefit of the ACS over the decennial long form is its timeliness. ACS estimates are released annually, every 3 years, and every 5 years instead of only once every 10 years. One of the major differences is that they do not offer a "snap shot" view of characteristics for a specific date, but instead provide average characteristics over a period of time (one year, three years, or five years). For instance, the 2007-2011 ACS 5-year estimates used in this report describe the

average characteristics for the City of Lynnwood over the 60-month period from January 2007 through December 2011. Like the long form, ACS estimates are not intended to count the population, but instead they draw from a sample population to provide information on a community's population and household characteristics. Because they are estimates and not counts, they are subject to sampling error, the degree of which the Census Bureau represents through margins of error based on a 90 percent confidence interval. Annually, the ACS surveys about 1 in 40 households, resulting in a relatively small sample size. Therefore, annual estimates have relatively large margins of error and are available only for geographies with population sizes of at least 65,000. Three- and five-year ACS estimates use data that have been aggregated over those time periods, which reduces the margins of error and increases the number of geographies reported on. For example, annual estimates are only available for the eleven largest cities in Washington State, 3-year estimates are available for 58 cities and census designated places, and 5-year estimates are available for every city as well as for Census Tracts and Census Block Groups.

The 5-year ACS estimates enable us to look at neighborhood trends and patterns. However, it is important to note that ACS and decennial census estimates on similar subjects may not always be comparable due to differences in residence rules, universes and/or reference time periods.



## Population

Lynnwood's population was estimated at 35,960 on April 1, 2013 by the OFM. Lynnwood holds steady as the third most populous city in Snohomish County. According to OFM, the estimated population for 2014 is 36,030 and for 2015 it is 36,420 which shows a stable population similar to surrounding jurisdictions.

## Households

The Census Bureau defines a "household" as "all the people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence." Over the past decade Lynnwood has seen some significant changes in household composition and size.

## Household Size

The average household size for homeowners and renters in Lynnwood is 2.7 and 2.4 respectively per Census data. The City of Lynnwood Housing Profile prepared by the Alliance for Housing Affordability dated December 2014 contains more detailed information about households and the current housing crisis.

## Age of Residents

Similar to national trends, Lynnwood's population is aging. Older adults age 65 and older comprised for a larger percentage of the population. Since 2004, the 55+ age segment has grown by 23%. Compared with other areas in the region, Lynnwood has the third highest percentage of older adult population (behind Edmonds and Bellevue).

## Diversity: Race and Ethnicity

With regard to race and ethnicity data, it is important to note that respondents are

asked about Hispanic or Latino ethnicity separate from race. For purposes of the Census, Hispanic is not a racial category. Hispanics can and do identify themselves as White, African American, or any of the other race categories. That said, Hispanics and Latinos are considered minorities and therefore in this report they are pulled out separately from racial categories.


Lynnwood is very much an ethnic and racially diverse city, with growing Hispanic and Asian populations. Between 2000 and 2011, Lynnwood's nonwhite population increased by 29%. Current data shows that 27% of Lynnwood's residents are foreign born. The large majority of Lynnwood's foreign born residents were born in Asia (50%) and about 30% were born in Mexico.

## Language

At home, 33% of residents speak a language other than English. More than half of the population can speak more than one language.

## Education

Current data shows that Lynnwood adults are less educated than adults in neighboring jurisdictions (Edmonds, Shoreline) Fewer than 27% of Lynnwood's adults have a bachelor's degree when compared to other jurisdictions (40%-50%). However, recent data from the City's Comprehensive Plan Update 2015 shows that the share of Lynnwood residents who hold a bachelor's degree or higher grew 21% from 2000, an increase that outpaces the 13% growth rate in the greater MSA.



## Potential Implications of Racial, Ethnic, and Language Diversity for Lynnwood

- The diversity in Lynnwood as indicated by racial and ethnic make-up is significant, and will require more cultural understanding and sensitivity by both public officials and residents.
- The high number of non-English speakers and residents who report that they do not speak English very well may have implications for the way the City, other public agencies such as schools, businesses, and other institutions provide services and make information accessible to the diverse population.

### Income

Income is one of the most fundamental indicators of what is happening in a community. The current median household income for Lynnwood is \$49,839. This is lower than other neighboring cities. As of 2014 and according to AHA data, 46% of Lynnwood residents are cost-burdened, meaning they spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs. For this Needs Assessment, median household income for the Seattle-Bellevue HUD Metro Fair Market Rent Area (HMFA) is used for Area Median Income (AMI) because it is the measure HUD uses to administer its programs, and is the predominant metric used for the purpose of assessing housing affordability. For a reference point, the 2012 Seattle-Bellevue HMFA was \$88,200. The affordable housing field defines income levels as they relate to AMI.


These are:

- Extremely Low Income – up to 30% AMI
- Very Low Income – up to 50% AMI
- Low Income – up to 80% AMI
- Moderate Income – up to 95% AMI
- Middle Income – up to 120% AMI

When a family in Lynnwood spends more than 30% of their income on housing, they are considered to be “cost burdened”, and if this family is lower income, they will have to sacrifice spending and find money out of the already very tight family budget to pay for essentials like food and medical care. In addition to mortgage and rent payments, housing costs include utilities, home insurance, rental insurance, and property taxes.

Cost burden is most challenging for those residents that have very low incomes: 88% of very low income Lynnwood renters are cost burdened, while only 12% of moderate income renters are similarly challenged. 44% of the City’s households earn less than 50% of the area median income which includes households categorized as extremely low or very low income.

In 2012, the median sale price for a single family home in Lynnwood was \$269,650. According to 2014 AHA data, for a family to afford this home and not be cost burdened, a minimum annual income of \$52,305 is needed. This is considered low income for a three- or four-person family. For the majority of low, moderate and middle income families in Lynnwood, the homes sold in 2012 were affordable. 89% of homes sold in 2012 would be considered affordable for low income families in Lynnwood,



whereas just 9% required greater than middle income. However, while payments on these homes may be affordable to lower income households, there are still other possible barriers to home ownership not captured in these figures, such as lack of access to financing or a down payment. There are also other concerns for existing homeowners, like vulnerability to foreclosure.

The most expensive counties in Washington State are Snohomish and King county where the two-bedroom housing wage is \$29.29 per hour. Pierce County is \$21.65.

The current fair market rent for a 1-bedroom apartment is \$956 per month and for a 2-bedroom apartment it is \$1,203 per month. Affordable rent for low income households at 30% of Area Median Income is \$570 per month.

According to Out of Reach 2016: Washington, an individual working at \$9.47/hr would have to work 78 hours each week to afford a modest 1-bedroom apartment at fair market rent.



## Goal #1: Food to Eat and Roof Overhead

### Why is this Goal Important?

Basic needs like food, shelter and clothing are critical for people to thrive and grow, and vital for a healthy community. This is particularly true for children, as studies show a correlation between poor academic performance and a child's diet. Adults, too, tend to perform better in the workplace if they have a healthy diet. Current data tells us that there many residents in Lynnwood that struggle with meeting basic needs.

### What's Working?


- Local emergency financial assistance service providers, like the Salvation Army, Catholic Community Services, United Way of Snohomish County, Domestic Violence Services of Snohomish County, the Korean Women's Association and Verdant, reported that they provided services to thousands of people in Lynnwood this year, largely through one-time food vouchers or cash assistance to avoid eviction or homelessness. They also aided with utility bills, car repairs, prescription drug costs and free dental care.
- The Lynnwood Food Bank is located behind the Silver Creek Community Church between 53rd and 176th Street SW. This bank has been serving residents for over 28 years. Volunteers of America is the lead agency for distribution of food to

this bank. Lynnwood Food Bank also receives distributions from Northwest Harvest. This food bank is the only general public distribution center and has doubled in size of the last five years. Distribution hours are 2:30PM to 6:15PM on Wednesdays serving zip codes 98036, 98037 and 98087.

- The Edmonds School District sponsors the Summer Food Program for Children, funded by the federal government through the state Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The program was established to make sure that low-income children had nutritious food over the summer break. The program provides breakfast, lunch and snacks to any child. The Edmonds School District Homeless Student Liaison also sends home prepackaged dinners on the school bus to K-12th grade students that are homeless and currently living in motels and hotels in Lynnwood so that those families have food to eat at dinnertime.

### Food Security and Hunger Prevalence

- Food security means access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the State of Washington ranks 37th in food insecurity among the 50 states, with 15.4% of Washington's households classified



as food insecure and 6.2% as very low food insecure.

- The percentage of students receiving free and reduced-cost breakfast and lunch can also measure community food security. This is real data that is specific and relevant to Lynnwood. According to Edmonds School District, the total percentage of students qualifying for free and reduced price lunch assistance is rising every year since 2009.

## Homelessness

- The federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act authorized the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to require an annual Point-in-Time count for homelessness. Washington State requires this count that follows HUD requirements per RCW 43.185C.030 and the Homeless Housing and Assistance Act.

## Data on Homeless Students in Edmonds School District


- The McKinney-Vento Act is federal legislation, in effect since 1987, that ensures the rights and protections of children and youth experiencing homelessness. The purpose of the Act is to ensure that homeless children and youth are enrolled in and succeed in school. The McKinney-Vento Act defines homeless children and youth as “individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence.”

- In 2015, the Edmonds School District reported 347 homeless students. At the time of this writing, in April 2016, the District reported 455 homeless students which is a significant increase of 76% for all students in K-12th grade. The District’s homeless student liaison has stated that the numbers have been increasing every year and that she doesn’t see an end to this and it is becoming more and more alarming.

## Emergency Shelter

- “Emergency Shelter” according to a federal definition, means “any facility with overnight sleeping accommodations, the primary purpose of which is to provide temporary shelter for the homeless in general or for specific populations of the homeless.”
- There is only one emergency shelter in Lynnwood. The YWCA’s Pathways for Women operates this shelter. The entire building consists of 18 units, 5 of which are dedicated to emergency shelter for single women with children. The five units are the only 24/7, 365 days a week emergency shelter units in the City of Lynnwood. This is quite alarming because the city’s population is approximately 36,000 people.
- The YWCA’s emergency shelter in Lynnwood has served thousands of families with children in crisis situations for over 20 years.
- Ninety-nine percent (99%) of the year-round shelters are located in





Everett or Seattle. In Lynnwood, when the YWCA shelter is full and if a family finds themselves in a crisis situation, then that family will be forced to pack up and relocate to a nearby city with those kinds of services. Children in this situation are likely to be moved into a new school district and must literally start over due to the lack of shelters available in Lynnwood.

### Affordable Housing

- Housing is defined as affordable if its occupants pay no more than 30% of their income for rent and utilities or for mortgage, taxes, and insurance. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), households who pay more than 30% of their income for housing are considered cost-burdened. Households who pay more than 50% of their income for housing are considered severely cost burdened, and may have trouble affording basic necessities such as food and clothing.
- Currently, 46% of Lynnwood residents are considered cost-burdened, meaning they spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs.
- 44% of the City's households earn less than 50% of area median income, which includes households categorized as extremely low or very low income.
- Household occupancy is split nearly evenly between owners and renters, with 53% of homes occupied by their owners.

### Housing Choice Voucher Availability (Section 8 Vouchers)

- Snohomish County administers the federal Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance program. Housing Choice vouchers are provided to low-income families, and the family is free to locate housing in the private rental market as the federal government subsidizes their rent.


### Rental Housing Market

- The Washington State minimum wage was \$9.47/hour. Voters approved to gradually raise the statewide minimum wage from the current \$9.47 to \$11 in 2017, \$11.50 in 2018, \$12 in 2019 and \$13.50 in 2020. Statewide, to afford a two-bedroom apartment without spending more than 30% of their income on housing, a household had to earn \$20 on average. In the Lynnwood area, that estimated figure would be higher at around \$22-\$23 due to the proximity to the Seattle-Bellevue area.

### Subsidized Rental Units

- Subsidized rental units include households with the lowest incomes, typically less than 30% AMI. Populations targeted for subsidized rental units often include the disabled, elderly, and other populations living on fixed incomes and with special needs. A subsidized property is one that receives funding, perhaps rental assistance or an operating subsidy, so that its residents pay below-





market rents affordable for their income level. Some properties only apply their subsidy to select units. It is also common for subsidized units to be restricted to certain groups like families, the elderly, or homeless.

### Workforce Rental Units

- Workforce rental units are targeted to working households that still cannot afford market rents. Workforce rental units and subsidized rental units are both considered “assisted”, but differ in several aspects. The key difference between subsidized and workforce units is that workforce units have a subsidy “built in” through the use of special financing methods and other tools, allowing (and typically requiring) the landlord to charge less for rent. According to AHA as of 2014, there are approximately 3,000 assisted units (both subsidized and workforce) within the city limits and the Metropolitan Urban Growth Area (MUGA).

### Subsidized Housing Units

- Subsidized housing units are funded by various sources including Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs); Section 8 Project-Based Vouchers; USDA Rental Assistance; HUD Section 202 Rental Assistance; and federally-subsidized public housing. As of 2014, there were 770 HCVs in use in Lynnwood administered by the Housing Authority of Snohomish County (HASCO). Lynnwood currently has approximately 1,300 subsidized

housing units within the city limits and within the MUGA.

- Families making up to 50% of AMI are eligible for Section 8 housing vouchers, however, 75% of these vouchers are limited to individuals making no more than 30% of AMI. Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) receive federal funds from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to administer the HCV program. HUD sets Fair Market Rents (FMRs) annually and PHAs determine their individual payment standards (a percentage of FMR) by unit bedroom size. The tenant identifies a unit, then the PHA inspects the unit to make sure it meets federal Housing Quality Standards and determines if the asked rent is reasonable. If the unit is approved, the tenant pays rent equal to 30-40% of their income, and the PHA pays the difference directly to the landlord. The two PHAs that administer the HCV program in Snohomish County are HASCO and the Everett Housing Authority (EHA).
- Because the number of vouchers a PHA can distribute is limited to the amount of federal funding received, the wait for a new applicant to receive a HCV can be extremely long and is usually dependent on existing voucher holders leaving the program. Until recently, the wait to receive an HCV from HASCO had been about 6 years. At the time this report was produced, however, there was no estimate of how long the wait for a voucher will be, as funding for the HCV program has



been frozen. HASCO has also closed their waitlist.


### Workforce Housing Units

- Lynnwood has fourteen workforce housing multifamily properties. Of these properties, there are approximately 1,500 workforce housing units. These properties have rent restrictions because the property owner received some form of one-time subsidy such as capital financing, Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) or a federal, state, and/or county grant for the construction or renovation of these units.

### Accessory Dwelling Units and Alternative Shared Rental Housing

- Accessory Dwelling Units, or ADUs, are permitted in Lynnwood and can provide a form of market rate housing that is more affordable and provides some additional density that is still compatible with single family home neighborhoods. These units are self-contained and

secondary to a primary residence, and can be created within an existing home, attached to the home, or outside the home. There are less than ten permitted ADU units in Lynnwood. If others exist, then there is not data currently available at this time. In early spring 2016, the City was looking at expanding the choices for ADUs by allowing for Detached ADUs (DADUs) to be allowed. On December 12, 2016, the City Council passed an ordinance to allow DADUs to be constructed in the city to meet this need. DADUs are now permitted within the RS-8 Residential zoning in the City of Lynnwood. According to Craigslist, rents for ADUs are typically similar to studio apartment rental pricing in Lynnwood at around \$700 per month. This will allow for more families to age in place and is responsive to the current market conditions regarding the housing crisis and cost of living.



## Goal #2: Supportive Relationships within Families, Neighborhoods, and Communities

### Why is this Goal Important?

- Supportive relationships are very important to the wellbeing of individuals, families and the community as a whole. Social support helps to give people the emotional and practical resources they need to feel cared for, valued and secure. The term social support refers to the physical and emotional comfort and the practical resources that we receive from family, friends and others. Especially in hard economic times, these human connections often are looked to when formal support agencies cannot assist.

### What's Working?

- The YWCA Pathways for Women has provided services, shelter and housing for homeless individuals and families in Lynnwood and South Snohomish County for over 35 years. The YWCA Pathways for Women is based on a “collective impact” model, a systematic approach that focuses on relationships between organizations and progress towards shared objectives. One of the current projects that the YWCA is working

on with the City of Lynnwood is a grant to address homelessness by connecting 80 homeless households (youth, individuals, and families) in the City of Lynnwood with services and housing resources and a minimum of 20 will move into stable housing. Also with this grant, the YWCA is preparing a survey administered by the Homeless Engagement Liaison in both English and Spanish to be distributed to the community and to a cross section of stakeholders.

### Service Trends

#### Support for Individuals, Families and Adults Raising Children

- Support for older adults is even more critical as the population ages, and more families live long distances apart. Many older adults will be “aging in place” and will require in-home care, most likely from family, friends and neighbors, in addition to paid providers. Programs that keep older adults active in the community are important opportunities for decreasing isolation. The City of Lynnwood’ Senior Center is a community center serving all people 62 years and older. This center offers a variety of



services, activities and special events.

- The Rotary Club of Lynnwood recently gave a grant that will fund an additional day of Pre-K at four elementary schools in the Edmonds School District. With the District's focus on PreK-3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Early Learning as part of the Strategic Direction, the Lynnwood Rotary has continued to be a strong advocate for this work. This is the fifth year, in partnership with the Lynnwood Rotary that a parent partnership called Edmonds Pre-K: A Family Learning Experience program has been offered at 10 elementary schools. It runs for two hours, twice a week at each location. The \$30,000 Lynnwood Rotary grant adds the second day at Beverly, Lynnwood, Mountlake Terrace and College Place elementary schools. In addition, it funds the kindergarten learning kits and professional development for preschool through third grade teachers.
- Jump Start is a pre-kindergarten, transitional program conducted in August for children preparing to enter kindergarten in September. There is no charge for this one-week program, and it is open to all registered kindergarten students in all Edmonds School District elementary schools.
- For over 25 years, the Alderwood Early Childhood Center, works with preschool students with special needs. These students attend developmental programs and are supported with special services

within the general education setting of the Edmonds School District.


- Edmonds School District's English Language Learner (ELL) program provides services to over 1,900 students. The District uses the Washington English Language Proficiency Assessment (WELPA) assessment to measure the English language proficiency level of new students whose first language is a language other than English.

### Increased Resources for School-Aged Kids

- Research indicates that positive afterschool and "out of school time" programs are critical for school-aged children and youth to build developmental assets and avoid at-risk behaviors. The Boys & Girls Club of Snohomish County – Edmonds Unit provides a before and after school fee based program that serves the majority of schools in Lynnwood. This program provides a variety of supervised educational and recreational activities, such as homework help, arts & crafts, sports and fitness games, as well as leadership training.

### Work/Family Supports

- Work and family support needs in the United States are increasing as more families work longer hours, and have more responsibilities for caring for their children, as well as frail, older family members; these caregivers are commonly called the "sandwich generation."



## Finding Help: Information and Referral

- Due to the recession, staff began to see a steady increase in calls from residents, beginning in late 2008 and early 2009. The most frequent requests for 2015 are housing, homelessness, mental health counseling referrals, food bags, job development and referrals for help with long term unemployment, access to health care, and health insurance enrollment questions. There are also language and cultural barrier issues resulting in problems accessing services. City staff see a trend in spending more time with each resident as more agencies and organizations are short staffed and don't have the capacity to respond especially to those with limited English. Also, staff has reported that even though the recession is "officially" over, that some of those who call the City for help are saying that they are still struggling with making ends meet with lower wage jobs than they had prior to the recession. The City has produced written materials about city activities and services in languages other than English, with a number of these materials still in progress.
- During the 2003 Washington State legislative session, lawmakers passed a bill making the three digit dialing code "2-1-1" the official state number for information about health and human services, including access after a natural or other disaster. Washington Information Network (WIN 2-1-1) is a one-stop approach

that streamlines access to social service agencies and resources.

Since the recession, the majority of residents that call the City are referred to 2-1-1 which is now operating on a 24-hour basis to assist Lynnwood residents with basic needs, such as food, shelter, and crisis-related resources. Requests exceeded service availability most often regarding utilities assistance, rent and mortgage and move-in costs, emergency shelters and legal.

- The City of Lynnwood also holds an annual Community Open House event in May every year. This event is for residents and community partners to learn about all the citywide projects that are currently underway with project stations setup as well as Spanish and ASL interpreters being available.
- A number of representatives from faith communities in Lynnwood who were interviewed reported that many of the requests they receive from their congregations are for support for basic needs, like food, but also for social support for older adults and single parents.
- Some Lynnwood employees, such as those working in the Fire Department or Code Enforcement, noted that sometimes they encounter residents in the community that are isolated and not only need health care or help with their repair needs, but they also are isolated without family or friends who can offer support.





## Information and Referral

- In virtually all Community Conversations, participants told City staff that historically there has been difficulties in finding human services resources. Staff has also heard from residents that there are a lot of service providers based in Everett and that they would like to see more services available here in Lynnwood.
- Since January 2016, the Verdant Health Commission has funded a Community Paramedic Program serving Lynnwood residents. The primary reason that Verdant Health Commission funded this grant program is that oftentimes, fire and emergency services personnel are dispatched to a home where a caller needs help but it is not a life-threatening situation. In 2013, that included 400 calls by the same 50 people, typically the elderly, uninsured or low income Lynnwood residents. With the creation of the Community Paramedic Program, however, those frequent callers are being identified and connected with resources to help prevent future non-emergency calls. Community resource paramedics within the Lynnwood Fire Department will visit those callers one-on-one in their home or contact them by phone to help identify the root cause of why the person contacted 911 for assistance. The Community Resource Paramedics can help the individual make connections to resources that may be available which better serves their needs.
- One organization, the Korean Women's Association (KWA) has been helping the underserved ethnic populations in Lynnwood by meeting basic needs for seniors, abused women and children, medically compromised and immigrants and refugees who speak little or no English. This nonprofit organization provides in home senior care, senior meal sites, low income housing, Work Force housing and naturalization and citizenship services.
- Verdant Health Commission has funded another program from July 2015 through June 2018 for insurance outreach and enrollment assistance at community locations. The insurance outreach and enrollment assistance program, run by WithinReach and supported by Verdant Health Commission, places in-person assisters at locations within our community, like job placements sites, food banks and the YWCA. There were more than 30,000 uninsured people in South Snohomish County in early 2013, and many people need one-on-one help with insurance enrollment into Washington Healthplanfinder, the state's health insurance exchange program. In partnership with United Way of Snohomish County, WithinReach is a service provider that helps individuals and families break down barriers and make connections for human services including basic needs and access to healthcare.




## Legal Services

- City staff has heard from participants in the Community Conversations that some of the clients that Navigators see have minor criminal offenses on their records and as a result those individuals encounter significant barriers to employment and housing. A major gap for services exists for direct representation, especially for survivors of domestic violence, immigration issues, foreclosure and credit counseling.

## Implications for Action

- As the economy is still recovering, Lynnwood families continue to need social support to raise their children, care for aging and or disabled loved ones, or a combination of the three. Family, friends and neighbors will be even more important to the care giving plan because funding is limited for many formal services, such as chore services and adult day health centers.
- Technical reports available from the RAND Corporation reveal that resources are needed for returning veterans. On the state level, nearly half of all veterans seeking mental health treatment did not receive even minimally adequate care. Most veterans with a mental health need would prefer to receive mental health services outside of the VA system and in a study by the RAND Corporation, veterans cited multiple barriers to seeking mental health services, including concerns about the side effects of medications and

- the persistent stigma surrounding mental health issues. Other barriers included concerns that seeking help could harm their career, they would be denied a security clearance, worries about losing coworkers' confidence and losing their supervisor's respect. Also cited was the fact that veterans often feel confused about the array of benefits and services available to them and say they are not sure where to go with questions about available resources. Interventions to address this challenge include navigation assistance; improving outreach to connect veterans with care coordinators; and increasing peer-led programs to help veterans navigate the health care system.
- The need for information provided in languages other than English continues to grow as the Puget Sound Region and South Snohomish County becomes more diverse. Human service providers, local government and businesses need to work together to meet this community need by providing more multi-lingual resources for this population of our community.
  - One of the best ways to work together on these big issues is to partner with nonprofit agencies, cities, and faith communities to include information about resources through printed media, multi-ethnic radio stations, public TV access, and neighbors sharing information with neighbors.
  - Lynnwood is lacking in providing safe gathering places for residents that serve entire neighborhoods.



When there is no safe gathering place, many residents often don't leave their homes and end up living in isolation. Volunteers of America Western Washington (VOAWW) is committed to developing a new Neighborhood Center to better serve the Lynnwood community at the intersection of Highway 99 and 196<sup>th</sup> Street SW. This would be a partnership between Boys & Girls Club of Western Washington, VOAWW, and Trinity Lutheran Church. The purpose of this neighborhood center will be to create a place where youth, seniors, and families can find the support and services that focus on their needs before they experience a personal crisis. By providing early intervention, the social, emotional, and financial costs associated with deep crisis can be prevented leading

to a healthier and more vibrant neighborhood. Families and individuals are better able to focus on longer-term planning and creating a more stable environment when basic needs are met. As far as the location at Highway 99 and 196<sup>th</sup> Street SW, this future Neighborhood Center will be strategically located where there is the greatest need, where there is potential for multiple agencies to partner together, and where there are easy transportation options (for example, Community Transit's Swift bus line runs every ten minutes) for those needing to access the services located at the center. The new Neighborhood Center will become a "one-stop shop" to meet the unique needs of Lynnwood and is expected to be a launch pad for new opportunities.





## Goal #3: A Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence and Abuse

### Why is this Goal Important?

- All forms of personal violence, including domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse and neglect, are unacceptable in any of our communities. During times of stress, people can be more vulnerable, and may need more support to handle situations without violence. Early intervention with individuals and families is critical to prevent additional physical and mental health issues. Counseling, legal, and financial assistance are just a few of the supports needed to help survivors of abuse heal. But equally important are efforts to educate the community on what strategies are effective to prevent violence from occurring in the first place. This is something that can be done in the school system at a very early age.

### What's Working?


- The Harborview Center for Sexual Assault and Traumatic Stress (HCSATS) offers telephone consultations, crisis response, advocacy, therapy, and sexual abuse evaluations. Many services are free of charge or can be paid for by Medicaid or Crime Victim's

Compensation. HCSATS also provides community education to build skills and develop strategies to prevent sexual assault.

- Domestic Violence Services of Snohomish County is a non-profit organization serving Snohomish County since 1976. Besides the YWCA in Lynnwood, this Everett based non-profit is the only program in Snohomish County providing emergency shelter and comprehensive, and confidential services. Also offered are advocacy-based counseling, support groups, legal advocacy, and a variety of children's services.

### Domestic Violence

- Domestic violence (DV), sometimes called family violence, profoundly affects the lives of survivors as well as the entire community. Domestic violence incidents involve family or household members; traditionally the term has referred to altercations between spouses and former spouses, but legally it includes roommates with or without a romantic relationship, and parents or children. Individuals may be of the same gender. During the recent economic downturn, some experts theorize that women who are abused are staying in dangerous situations longer. The financial and



human costs of domestic violence are staggering, and can negatively impact generations to come.

- It is extremely difficult to determine the exact annual number of Snohomish County domestic violence victims. However, based on police reports and data, we know that domestic violence has consistently rated as one of the top three concerns for Lynnwood. The biggest challenges are lack of emergency shelter, housing, and financial resources, as well as an increase in non-English speaking clients.

## Service Trends

### Accessing Services

- Only a small percentage of survivors access formal services. Thousands of women were recorded in Snohomish County's data system as receiving face-to-face community-based domestic violence services in Snohomish County in 2001, the last year this data was collected. This represents from 2% to 12% of the women who may be physically abused by a husband, partner, or boyfriend each year. However, reports from service providers continue to show that tens of thousands of additional contacts are made each year with unknown victims over the telephone.

### Housing


- Housing is a major concern for survivors and their families. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, DV is

the leading cause of homelessness for women.

- There are a limited number of shelter beds available in Lynnwood. The YWCA is the only provider in South Snohomish County and in Lynnwood offering confidential shelter. The Pathways for Women Shelter has housed 457 individuals in 176 families among the five emergency units over the past five years. 280 of those individuals served were children and 177 were adults. The YWCA has a 95% success rate of moving individuals and families into more permanent stable housing.

### Legal Assistance and Mental Health Counseling

- Legal assistance remains a primary need for survivors of domestic violence. Many survivors of domestic violence are not able to obtain adequate legal representation. A recent economic study found that while shelter, hotlines, and counseling had no significant impact on the likelihood of abuse, the availability of legal services decreased the likelihood that women would be abused. Helping survivors legally pursue and obtain protection orders, custody, child support and other financial needs, gives them the physical safety and financial security that enable them to leave the abuser.
- Included in the full range of services needed for survivors is mental health counseling. Providers report that many survivors are experiencing Post Traumatic Stress



Disorder (PTSD) and suicidal ideation as a result of their abuse. There is a lack of counselors who have worked specifically with this population, and inadequate funding to cover services.

### Services for Children Who Witness or are Victims of Abuse

- Recent research indicates that children who witness domestic violence show more anxiety, low self-esteem, depression, anger and temperament problems than children who do not witness violence in the home. These disturbances can impede healthy development, cause school difficulties, and continue to be a problem into adulthood.

### Older & Vulnerable Adult Abuse

- Although domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking affect victims in all age groups, older individuals who are victims face additional challenges in accessing services needed to enhance their safety. Appropriate interventions may be compromised by misconceptions that older persons are not victims of these types of crimes, that domestic violence does not occur or lessens in later life, or that the abuse is an expression of stress associated with caring for an aging individual. Age or disability may increase the isolation of these victims and their dependence on abusers for care or housing. Also, these cases may go unnoticed because criminal justice system personnel may perceive a

victim's injuries as arising from aging, illness, or disability instead of recognizing that the injuries may be attributed to violence in the home.


- No one knows exactly how many older Americans are being abused, but according to best estimates, between 1 and 2 million people age 65 and older have been abused, exploited or neglected by their caregivers. Incidence rates vary from 7.6 to 10%. It is estimated that for every case of elder abuse, neglect, exploitation or self-neglect, about five go unreported.

### Refugees and Immigrants

- Due to their immigration status, some immigrant and refugee women may face more barriers in escaping abuse and accessing services. Lynnwood's changing demographics create even more urgency for services that are responsive to these communities. Gaps in access to services include multi-lingual information and support and awareness campaigns. Undocumented survivors lack access to services like housing, and often fear that if they call for help, they will be detained and deported.

### Implications for Action

- One of the largest gaps in services for survivors is for emergency housing, legal representation for child custody, protection orders, immigration, and financial issues. When these services are unavailable, it becomes much harder for survivors to maintain their safety,



return to employment, and become self-sufficient. Community awareness and engagement efforts ensure that the issue of domestic violence gains public visibility.

- Children and youth who witness domestic violence are at risk of internalizing the abuse. Data suggests that child abuse occurs in approximately 70% of families experiencing domestic violence. All-encompassing and holistic programs are needed to break the cycle of abuse for future generations.
- Services for older adult survivors of family violence need to be available to target the particular issues experienced by this increasing population.
- Child abuse is the physical, psychological or sexual mistreatment, or physical neglect of children by their parents or guardians. Neglect is the most common form of child abuse, but rates are hard to establish because neglect is often unreported.

## Service Trends


### Risk Factors

- Child maltreatment causes stress that can disrupt early brain development. Extreme stress can harm the development of the nervous and immune systems. As a result, children who are abused or neglected are at higher risk for health problems as adults, including alcoholism, depression, drug abuse, eating disorders, obesity, sexual promiscuity, smoking, suicide, and certain chronic diseases.

- A study of abused and neglected children found that they had lower grades, more suspensions and grade repetitions, and were more likely to drop out of school than their peers, independent of the effects of poverty. Additionally, studies show that abused and neglected children are arrested approximately five times more often for juvenile crimes and are twice as likely to be arrested as adults.
- Families with returning service members who are experiencing Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and combat-related stress may also be at increased risk for child abuse.

## Implications for Action

- Low income can be a contributing factor in child neglect. Parents and caregivers experiencing economic hardship have challenges in providing the basics for their children. The same can be true for child abuse, due to stress from lack of resources or war-related traumatic injuries. With the ongoing economic recovery, it is even more important to offer basic needs assistance to families with children, and provide outlets for stress from unemployment and other issues to help prevent child abuse and neglect.
- Similar to children experiencing family violence, abused or neglected children also can bring those issues into the next generation when they act as they have been treated. These children need therapeutic care and



opportunities to build trust and self-esteem to succeed in school and life.

### Need for Services

- Harborview Children's Response Center (CRC), which is a program of Services for Sexual Assault and Traumatic Stress (HCSATS), had provided advocacy and counseling for child and youth victims of sexual assault as well as community-based prevention initiatives since 1985. They also provided services to children impacted by other forms of trauma and victimization.

### Human Trafficking

- Human trafficking, which includes labor and sex trafficking, is a modern day form of slavery. Approximately 600,000 to 800,000 victims annually are trafficked across international borders and include women, men and children. Some victims are native born U.S. citizens, as well. Victims are coerced to prostitute or to work without pay and often subjected to physical and psychological dangers, such as severe beatings, rape, drug addiction and other forms of violence.
- Lynnwood Police have reported that there have been instances of human trafficking in the city in the past which fall under the guise of prostitution. Human trafficking is fairly rare and difficult to track because of the transient nature of the involved players. The problem does not exist solely within the city limits.

Human trafficking is a regional problem that is greater than just the City of Lynnwood and requires a multi-county response.

### Community Perceptions

- Human trafficking is an issue that was not mentioned in any of the Community Conversations. This is not uncommon due to the sensitivity of the issue. Physicians and the Internet are the first points of contact for these issues.

### Implications for Action

- Even during times of funding cuts, it is critical to support community education about sexual assault, rape and child sexual abuse, as decreased staff levels at many agencies may complicate finding and getting help.
- Consent workshops for youth are rising in popularity among sexual assault prevention experts. Informing youth as to what sexual consent is, how to develop boundaries, and the legal definitions of assault can help them to make more informed choices as young adults.
- There is a strong connection between early, untreated child sexual abuse and homelessness and trafficking. According to Cocoon House, upwards of 40% of youth who are homeless experience sexual assault prior to becoming homeless.
- Survivors of abuse often have multiple needs including parental support and childcare, legal assistance, transitional and permanent housing.



## Goal #4: Health Care to Be as Physically and Mentally Fit as Possible

### Why is this Goal Important?

- Lynnwood's economic health and well-being depends on the physical and mental health of its residents. Over the years, health care's rising cost, language barriers, transportation issues, and cultural competency have been obstacles for some residents to obtain the quality of health care they need. With the passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Health Care Act (also known as the Affordable Care Act or ACA) in 2010, however, some of the barriers to accessing health insurance are being addressed for much of the population of uninsured adults 19-64 years old. As more components of the ACA are implemented, there will be much to be learned about how such a large system-change in health care has worked but also more information about what gaps and barriers still exist, for example dental care for services that are more expensive and less affordable for many segments of the population.

### What's Working?


- With the expansion of the State Children's Health Insurance Program, called Apple Health for

Kids, Washington State will be able to cover more low-income children, including those who are immigrants. Since 2014, children up to age 18 are eligible for this program if their family earns up to 400% of the federal poverty level.

### Snapshot of Health Indicators

- US Census data from 2010 roughly represents neighborhoods with populations typically between 3,000 and 7,000 people. Lynnwood's differences in health status are linked directly to income and income disparities across communities within the City. Highway 99 is a rough dividing line. West of the highway, residents are older and whiter and East of Highway 99, they are younger and more ethnically diverse. Renters and low-income residents concentrate along Highway 99 and along the major arterials, such as 196<sup>th</sup> Street SW, 36<sup>th</sup> Ave W (west of Alderwood Mall) where the properties are zoned for multifamily development. Economic security is defined as the level of income that allows a family to sustain itself without government support. In Snohomish County, we know that achieving economic





security requires an annual income of \$71,604 for a family of two workers and two small children.<sup>i</sup> Verdant Health Commission's Community Health and Wellness Assessment 2013 stated that "similar work has been done to assess economic security for people 65 or older, taking into account potential long-term care costs. For example, in Snohomish County a person over the age of 65, living on their own, in a house they own fully and requiring 16 hours of care a week is estimated to need an income of \$45,052 per year. Many people in the District live below these income levels."

- Mortality and morbidity rates are lower in the City of Lynnwood than for the rest of Snohomish County.<sup>ii</sup> Data sets from both Verdant Health Commission's Community Health and Wellness Assessment 2013 and Snohomish County Human Services Department indicate that there are wide variations in mortality rates and other health indicators by zip code within the City of Lynnwood. For example,

- 98043 has almost twice the rate of obesity as 98020. 98020 is a zip code that is located within the single family residential areas of the City of Edmonds mostly in wealthier neighborhoods along the Puget Sound. 98043 is a zip code that is located along the

Snohomish/King County line in the City of Mountlake Terrace which is at the most southern portion of our city limits.


- 98020 has the lowest mortality rate, but 98037 – just a 15-minute drive away – has an age-adjusted mortality rate that is 60% higher and considerably higher than the County's overall rate.<sup>iii</sup>
- 98043, 98036 and 98036 have admission rates to outpatient treatment for publicly funded substance abuse that are two to three times the rate for 98020.
- 98043, 98036 and 98037 have the highest rates of homelessness, 5-7 times that of 98020.<sup>1</sup>

## Medical Care and Coverage

- Until the passage of the ACA, there were primarily two public programs that provided health insurance coverage services to eligible individuals in Washington State: Medicaid, (federal and state), and Basic Health (state). Together, these programs (in addition to smaller programs like Apple Health for Kids) helped to ensure that many low-income individuals received care. Medicare, the federal healthcare program for adults age 65 and older is not limited to people with low incomes. However,

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<sup>1</sup> Verdant Health Commission Health and Wellness Assessment 2013, pp 7



beginning in October 2013 people who are uninsured age 19-64 whose incomes are too high in the past to qualify for Medicaid have the opportunity to enroll in Medicaid due to expanded income guidelines (up to 138% of the federal poverty level compared to 100% of the federal poverty level) or in a subsidized health plan by accessing the new online marketplace,

**Washington Healthplanfinder** (<http://wahealthplanfinder.org>). Individuals, families and small businesses in Washington can compare and enroll in health care plans or expanded Medicaid. In August 2013, the State announced that Medicaid would be changed to Apple Health similar to Apple Health for Kids program. Undocumented immigrants are not eligible for any health insurance under the ACA guidelines, so there is still a great need for health care for this population.

### Disparities in Health, Care and Coverage

- Lack of health insurance was related to household poverty, education, race/ethnicity and gender in Snohomish County. The increasing diversity of the City of Lynnwood and the County is a trend that brings to light disparities in health, care and coverage as shown in the most recent data collected by both Snohomish County and Verdant Health Commission in 2015 and 2013, respectively. As of 2016, the Edmonds School District has more

than 2,000 students who speak 82 different languages and 34% of those students in grades K-12<sup>th</sup> are on the free/reduced breakfast and lunch programs which indicate that there are huge numbers of families that are struggling to meet basic needs, such as having food on the table and having health insurance for all members of their families. For example, community conversations from the Verdant Needs Assessment work completed in 2013 indicated that many people may have some pensions and even Social Security, but still not be able to afford health insurance co-pays and are worried about their financial future.


- Low income status and high rates of mental health problems are closely linked. Studies consistently find that the prevalence of depressive symptoms is higher among those with low incomes.

- For many recent immigrants (predominately but not exclusively people of color), language barriers create major access problems.

According to the Lynnwood 2012 Community Profile, there is a large percentage of residents reported speaking a language other than English at home. The ACS results report that 35% of families in Lynnwood speak a language other than English at home. This is significant because this number is nearly twice as much as the rest of Snohomish County (17%) and the rest of the nation (20%).

Nationwide, one in five limited English speakers avoid seeking care altogether because they are unable





to access care in their language. A large percentage of Lynnwood residents were born in another country. The top languages spoken by student families of the Edmonds School District are English, Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, Russian, Ukrainian and Arabic.

### Service Trends Access to Care

- When people are uninsured, they typically use the emergency department of a local hospital for healthcare which is extremely expensive. Many patients cannot pay these bills so they apply for what is called “charity care” from the hospital. “Charity care” will pay for a portion of their bills (from 20% to 100%). Washington State is one of only a few states with a law governing charity care. The law was enacted in 1990 with the support of Washington’s hospitals. In Washington, there is no charity care pool, so hospitals cover their expenses through philanthropy. According to a 2012 report by the State Insurance Commissioner, from 2008 to 2010, charity care by hospitals rose 36%, and in 2012, it was over \$1 billion annually.<sup>2</sup>
- Another indicator of lack of access to healthcare is the fact that there is a large segment of the Lynnwood population that either cannot afford to go to doctor and/or cannot easily access medical care due to lack of

proper paperwork and language barriers.<sup>3</sup>

### Care for Lynnwood Residents

- The Lynnwood Sea Mar center provides mental health and substance abuse services to children, youth, and adults. The site is state licensed as a community mental health agency and certified chemical dependency agency. Sea Mar meets all requirements for court-mandated services.
- Verdant Health Commission funded the creation of a South County Detox Center in September 2015. Evergreen Recovery Centers will be opening a new detox center in Lynnwood that will help manage withdrawal for low-income adults detoxing from alcohol and opiates, with the goal of connecting patients with longer-term treatment. Currently, these adults are typically seen in the hospital emergency room when they are seeking help. This is a very important program because the one existing Snohomish County detox center in Everett is always at capacity. The new Evergreen Recovery Center will increase the number of beds available to treat patients and make it easier for adults to get these services closer to their families in South Snohomish County.

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<sup>2</sup> Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner. (May 2012) What’s at stake: the Affordable Care Act in Washington

<sup>3</sup> Community Provider Conversation Café: Appendix F, Verdant Health Commission: Community Health and Wellness Assessment 2013



## Dental Services in Lynnwood for Low-Income People

- The Verdant Health Commission began work in a new initiative during summer 2014 to improve adult's access to dental care. This was a result of 1 in 3 adults in South Snohomish County that were lacking dental insurance. Verdant Health Commission funded a partnership with Community Health Center of Snohomish County to bring increased levels of service to our residents who cannot afford to see a dentist or get preventative oral health care. CHC's new facility in Edmonds opened in 2014 and CHC also offers dental services at its Lynnwood clinic.
- In 2016, the Puget Sound Christian Clinic's Dental Clinic in Lynnwood is now serving patients without dental insurance who need comprehensive dental care, including exams, x-rays, cleanings, fillings, crowns and extractions at no- or low-cost. This clinic is located within Northwest Church, which is located on Scriber Lake Road.
- Senior Services of Snohomish County has been offering no-cost to low-cost dental care at its facility utilizing volunteer dental staff.
- Verdant Health Commission has funded from September 2015 through September 2018 the Mobile Dental Clinics specific to South Snohomish County. The mobile dental clinic is on location at five sites and staffed by volunteer

dentists, hygienists and assistants to serve those in need.

## Prescription Drugs, Hearing Aids and Eye Care

- Medicaid, Basic Health Plan and Medicare provide prescription drug coverage; all have some limitations in terms of how much will be covered. However, since 2014, the Affordable Care Act provides coverage for this gap by discounting covered brand name drugs and other benefits. This will improve the ability for older adults to afford their medications, which was expressed as a concern during Community Conversations held in 2013 as part of the Verdant Health Commission's Community Health and Wellness Assessment. This unmet need is also reflected in the data that the City received during the last quarter from North Sound 2-1-1 which showed a very high number of phone calls received by Lynnwood zip codes asking for help paying for medical prescriptions.<sup>4</sup>
- Hearing aids for people with hearing loss are not covered under Medicare or Medicaid, so many low-income people who participated in Community Conversations voiced their concerns about their inability to afford these very expensive hearing devices.
- Another gap for people with low-incomes is coverage for prescription eye glasses. Medicaid covers some eye surgeries and vision screenings,

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<sup>4</sup> North Sound 2-1-1 Data by Lynnwood Zip Codes April 2016



but not basic needs, such as prescription eye glasses.

## Substance Abuse Prevalence

- Substance abuse in Snohomish County and Lynnwood continues to negatively impact people's lives and requires treatment services. According to a national report released 2016, heroin use and related deaths have increased significantly across Washington in the past decade, but even more so in Snohomish County and in Lynnwood than in neighboring jurisdictions. Younger people are finding it easier to obtain heroin than prescription opiates. Another recent report, titled "Heroin in Snohomish County: Mortality and Treatment Trends" issued January 2015 by the Snohomish Health District and Snohomish County clearly state that Snohomish County is facing an epidemic of drug overdoses. Of approximately 300 deaths per year due to unintentional injury, 44% were due to unintentional poisoning. The primary agents for unintentional poisoning deaths were prescription opioid analgesics (particularly oxycodone and hydrocodone) and heroin.<sup>5</sup>
- According to the Healthy Youth Survey, 50% of 12th graders perceived drug use as a risk in the Edmonds School District. In addition, 37% of 12th graders in the Edmonds School District were at

risk for favorable attitudes towards drug use.


- E-cigarette use has been rising steadily, especially among youth. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, e-cigarette use among high school students rose from 1.5% in 2011 to 16% in 2015. From Community Conversations, City staff is aware that there is a perception among youth that "vaping" is "not as bad as smoking cigarettes" even though research clearly shows that kids are getting hooked on nicotine and many reports state that the presence of vape stores everywhere are threatening to prolong the "tobacco epidemic." Current FDA data show that the usage of sweet e-cigarette flavors such as gummy bear and cotton candy play a big role in marketing these products to minors and the youth population.

## Access to Treatment

- Right now, Lynnwood has a limited number of treatment resources available. We know that Sea Mar and Evergreen Recovery Center are both located in Lynnwood however beyond this, it appears that the majority of people who are seeking treatment must go to Everett area or to Seattle at this time. However, with partnerships, Community Conversations, and the creation of the new Lynnwood Human Services Commission, City staff is expecting that there will be

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<sup>5</sup> Heroin in Snohomish County: Mortality and Treatment Trends, January 2015



more treatment options available as more and more service providers extend their staff and resources to support the needs of Lynnwood residents. City staff is seeing an expansion of services of both existing and new service providers to the Lynnwood area as we continue this work in human services.

### Mental Health Prevalence

- According to the most recent Healthy Youth Survey for the Edmonds School District, 24% of 8th graders reported that they had favorable attitudes towards drugs. 27% of 8th graders had depressive feelings, 16% considered attempting suicide and 13% had made a suicide plan. 61% of 10th graders reported that they felt nervous or anxious to the degree that 37% of 10th graders in the Edmonds School District felt so sad or hopeless for two weeks or more that they stopped doing their usual activities. This trend is slightly higher than the statewide percentage.

### Service Trends

- From Community Conversations, we know that service providers are reporting a higher demand for mental services for youth and adults, including all segments of the homeless population both chronic and short-term homeless people. For example, they are

seeing a trend with youth presenting with both mental health and substance abuse issues and sometimes on top of that there are other crisis situations such as homelessness and domestic violence.<sup>6</sup>

- Cocoon House has reported a higher demand than usual for mental services for youth. They are seeing a trend with youth presenting with co-occurring mental health and substance abuse issues.
- Crisis Clinic provides a 24-Hour Crisis Line which is available on the Human Services city website and the North Sound 2-1-1 Community Information Line which is administered and housed at Verdant in Lynnwood.
- Verdant Health Commission has funded a program from July 2015 through June 2017 for Behavioral Health Prevention Programs. This therapeutic health services program is focused on reducing the impact of substance use and mental health disorders for youth in middle and high schools in Lynnwood. Therapists work in schools and with young people who are on probation, by offering assessments for early detection. The program also provides in-school and other local opportunities for professional development, student education, family education and coaching.

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<sup>6</sup> Community Conversations by City Staff, KWA, YWCA, Verdant, January 2016-April 2016



## Implications for Action

- With the implementation of the Affordable Care Act's expansion of Medicaid eligibility and establishment of the Health Care Exchange for others who are currently uninsured, there is great potential for residents to gain improved health and well-being. The next few years will be critical in ensuring that all people who are eligible are enrolled and receive all the benefits to which they are entitled.
- Even though the Affordable Care Act requires health plans to include services for mental health under the federal and state laws, there will be gaps for some people needing these services. Funding cuts can have a huge impact on low income households in Lynnwood.
- Immigrants and people who are English Language Learners (ELL)

requires that providers are able to offer culturally competent health care in order to meet the needs of their client base. Becoming a culturally competent service provider can involve staff training, the provision of interpreter services and translated materials, and restructuring programming to better serve Lynnwood's diverse population. These services are critical to help address the health disparities that exist in many communities.

- Substance abuse among adults and youth is on the rise, particularly the use of heroin. Continued community education about the risks, and better understanding about the causes, need to be part of the community dialogue to address this increase in Lynnwood.

<sup>i</sup> Economic Security Institute, Basic Economic Security Tables and Elder Economic Security Standard Index, 2013

<sup>ii</sup> Verdant Health Commission Health and Wellness Assessment 2013

<sup>iii</sup> Snohomish County Human Services 2013



## Goal #5: Education and Job Skills to Lead an Independent Life

### Why is this Goal Important?

- Education is a very important piece of obtaining and achieving self-sufficiency. For example, an individual can lose their job, have their family broken apart, get sick, and have a family crisis, etc. but it is education that no one can take away from you no matter how difficult and how many hard situations are encountered and faced in life. Education, job skills and childcare, in addition to the economic climate, contribute to a person's ability to find employment. Although the Puget Sound region has some of the highest minimum wages in the country, Lynnwood residents require strong earnings in order to be self-sufficient.


In order to get living wage jobs, workers must possess competitive job skills that are applicable to today's ever-changing technologies. This requires higher levels of education in all aspects of the workforce, even more so than of the past and previous years. The economic downturn of 2009 highlighted the need for an advanced education as well as the limited number of positions available in Snohomish County

offering living wages. We know that Lynnwood residents need affordable, quality childcare so that families can work and provide for themselves and we also know that reliable public transportation is key for people being able to access employment.<sup>iii</sup>

### What's Working?

- Edmonds Community College's Workforce Development Department provides quality learning opportunities for people through credit and noncredit programs. There are job and technical skill training programs, such as aerospace training and customized business certificates that are offered to prepare for specific jobs or to improve existing skills. In 2016, another important program that that college offers are tuition assistance programs, such as Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET), opportunity grants, worker retraining, and WorkFirst (for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients). Edmonds Community College has high school-to-college academic and





career programs and internships available.

- At Edmonds Community College, there is a Veterans Training Support Center (VTSC) which provides continuing educational opportunities and professional development to those who provide direct service to veterans and their family members. The aim is to raise awareness and understanding on issues specific to veterans such as invisible wounds like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury. The project is funded by the King County Veterans and Human Services Levy and the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs PTSD & Way Trauma Counseling Program.
- Edmonds School District has a Pre-K early learning program that is offered at nine elementary schools in the Lynnwood area including Beverly Elementary, Lynndale Elementary, Lynnwood Elementary, Meadowdale Elementary, and Spruce Elementary. Parents and caregivers can register four and five year olds at the participating elementary schools for enrollment in early learning opportunities that help these younger children be ready for and succeed in kindergarten. Research has firmly established that investing in early learning yields powerful benefits for children; both in early elementary and as a cornerstone to their overall educational success. This Pre-K program is part of the District's PreK-3 Early Learning program

which is a measure of the Strategic Direction plan.

### Prevalence of Educational Attainment, Age, Race and Gender Effects on Income

- In general, Snohomish County has a lower educational attainment level than does other neighboring jurisdictions<sup>iii</sup>. The American Community Survey results were that 20% of Snohomish County residents hold a Bachelor's degree. In Lynnwood, the percentage of adults age 25 and older who had earned a Bachelor's degree or above was 26%. In comparison, in King County, the American Community Survey results indicate that the percentage of adults age 25 and older who had earned a Bachelor's degree or above was 64%. This data also indicated that 24% of Lynnwood adults (over 25) have less than a high school diploma. This is similar to other communities throughout Washington State, but the lowest percentages are seen in other counties (King, Pierce Counties) in the Puget Sound region which are much lower ranging between 2%-10%.<sup>iii</sup>
- Data clearly indicates that there is no industry in Washington where women earn the same wages as men, even when accounting for educational background.<sup>iii</sup> Data shows that the "wage gap" between men



and women is significant. Women who work full time still earn, on average, just 76 cents for every dollar men earn. This translates to \$41,055 for women annually compared to \$54,194 for men. There are a number of existing research that tells us that single women with children are at a greater risk for poverty than men; for a single woman with children the poverty rate statewide is 37%.<sup>iii</sup>

- A report titled “Pulling Apart: A State-by-State Analysis of Income Trends” by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) and the Economic Policy Institute, shows that income inequality in Washington state is at historic highs. For the past few decades, the gap between Washington’s richest and poorest households has been widening. Low-income families pay a higher share of their income in state and local taxes. The bottom line is that in order to ensure shared economic prosperity for all of Lynnwood’s residents, there needs to be a collective effort from both public and private sectors to support programs, funding, and collaboration to not only give educational opportunities to the underserved and underprivileged segments of our local population, but also to connect those individuals and households with resources that can bring shared prosperity for all people in our community. An

initiative to increase the statewide minimum wage to \$13.50 over four years is a necessary step to help workers and families in Washington state. Women and people of color would especially benefit, given that nearly 30% of women workers and more than 40% of Black and Latino workers currently make less than \$13.50 per hour.<sup>iii</sup>

- The aging of the population has enormous implications for the workforce. More older adults are delaying retirement or returning to the workforce because they need employment to make ends meet.
- New data shows social programs lifted 241,000 kids out of poverty in Washington state.<sup>iii</sup> The well-being of our children is the most significant predictor of our long-term economic and social success. A new “Kids Count” report examined the impact that social programs had on the economic well-being of children and families in Washington state. According to the data, over 455,000 children in Washington state – one in four (28 percent) – live in families experiencing economic hardship. Social programs, however, lifted 241,000 of these children out of poverty, cutting the rate by more than half (13 percent).



## Recent and Future Job Market

- Washington State's job market seems to be improving since 2012. The City of Lynnwood's year to date development permit fee totals for 2015 indicate that 2015 was the busiest year for new development on record. The City's Permit Center issued permits representing \$26.9 million in new construction which is likely not a firm indicator of annual results, it is roughly thirteen times previous January totals. It should be noted that prior to 2015, the City would typically see about \$50 million in new construction for the entire year.<sup>iii</sup>

## Minimum Wage vs. Living Wage


- A "living wage" is defined as the minimum income needed by a family or individual to purchase basic necessities without the help from public assistance. Living wage calculations include the cost of housing, food, transportation, health care, taxes, childcare and household, clothing and personal items.
- The University of Washington Center for Women's Welfare has calculated a Self-Sufficiency Standard by State for 2014. For families with children, the amount needed to cover basic needs increases considerably. For families with young children, the cost of housing and child care combined typically

makes up 50% of the family budget.

- The University of Washington and Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County, in collaboration with its partners have published a number of reports that provide data and analysis supporting the fact that the cost of meeting basic needs continues to increase in most of Washington despite stagnating wages and difficult economic times.

## Childcare Availability

- The majority of parents in Lynnwood require regularly scheduled childcare for children from birth to five years old. Child Care Aware of Washington is the state's most respected hub of information for parents and child care providers. Based in Tacoma, this agency provides free child care searches and referrals by zip code. It also provides scholarships for early learning professionals to enrich their expertise and this agency is an advocate for safe, high-quality child care.
- For many families their first choice is extended family (referred to as family, friend & neighbor care, FFN), especially for infants and toddlers. As children grow, and parents seek out child care, families may experience barriers including cost, transportation, and cultural or system navigation. Families more likely to have FFN childcare arrangements include those who are



low or moderate-income, Latino, refugees and immigrants, and those with a child with special needs. Given the growing diversity of the Lynnwood population, it is likely that many of these families use FFN care.

- Families and especially single parents face a number of issues such as language and culture, location and transportation, hours of operation, quality concerns and cost when considering and paying for child care. In recent years, providers in Snohomish County offer what is called “extended care” which is child care up to 6:00PM, “non-standard” hours which is after 6:30PM, overnight and/or during weekends. This is very important for parents that have a job that requires them to work night shifts and weekends because it is very difficult to find a licensed childcare provider that has this flexibility.

### Childcare Affordability

- Childcare for a family in Lynnwood can range between an estimated \$17,500 up to \$25,500/year depending on the number of children, how old each child is (infants, toddlers and preschoolers cost substantially more than elementary school children) and childcare costs in the Puget Sound area are the some of the highest in the state of Washington.<sup>iii</sup> Family childcare, although a less expensive option, still costs over 10% of Lynnwood’s median household income.

- Washington State has a childcare subsidy program called Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) serves low income families while they work or meet WorkFirst participation requirements. When enrollment in WCCC is full, a wait list to receive WCCC benefits is maintained. The family income must be at or below 200% FPL eligibility level.

### Childcare Quality

- The Washington State Department of Early Learning (DEL) uses *Early Achievers* which is the state’s Quality Rating and Improvement System which offers training, coaching and consultation to early learning providers in childcare centers. This is a voluntary, no-cost program which helps providers improve the quality of their programs. Providers are rated on a scale of 1-5 and the ratings are posted on websites such as DEL and Child Care Resources to assist parents in selecting quality childcare.<sup>iii</sup>

### Service Trends

#### WorkFirst Participation Among Lynnwood-area Residents

- WorkFirst participants must be working or actively seeking a job and assistance is limited to 60 months in a person’s lifetime. The program provides training and education for low income



- parents who are working at least 20 hours per week.
- The percentage of parents who are homeless without housing has steadily increased since 2014.<sup>iii</sup>

### Available Supports and Training for Employment

- The Career Action Center at Edmonds Community College is a program that helps to create connections between employers and students by providing opportunities for recruitment, career information, job search, internship education, and access to training. Services include online job and internship listings, a career resource room, job and internship search assistance, and an academic internship program. Edmonds Community College also offers the State of Washington's Worker Retraining Program. This program is for people who are facing a layoff, currently collecting unemployment benefits, displaced homemakers, recently discharged veterans, among other categories.
- Edmonds Community College also offers courses such as Intensive English as a Second Language (ESL). When students arrive, they take a placement test to find their level of English, from Level 1 to Level 5. Courses specifically include job seeking related content.

- Washington's Employment Security Department's WorkSource Centers around the state provide onsite resources for employment and workers. In Lynnwood, the WorkSource building is located along a bus line on Highway 99 and 180<sup>th</sup> Street SW. At this location, unemployed workers can file for unemployment insurance, get information about education and training, and take courses such as how to prepare a functional resume, how to update a LinkedIn page, informational interview techniques, and resources for mature workers (over age 45).

### Childcare Supports and Services

- Since 1990, Child Care Resources (CCR) provides assistance for families seeking child care in Washington State. Experts are available by phone or email to help families explore their early learning options and to make informed choices based on ratings.
- There is a growing need in Snohomish County for programs specifically providing childcare to homeless families. This is very important because case managers help families secure stable, quality childcare so they can find housing, look for work, and go to court or medical appointments.



## Community Perceptions

- Based on Community Conversations, people's perception of affordable and quality childcare as a community problem continues to be an issue as the economy is recovering. Childcare costs have a greater impact the low income and moderate income populations, especially segments of our community that are cost burdened.

## Implications for Action

Unlike some of the other jurisdictions in Snohomish County, Lynnwood does have a greater abundance of jobs available as well as a fairly solid economic base with a number of commercial developments that are in construction right now. It is expected that over the next few years, specifically 2020-2023, the City will experience even more economic growth and physical changes as Sound Transit begins the Lynnwood Link light rail station construction near the City Center. This will bring more job opportunities which will allow for more people at lower incomes to access better jobs. It will be critical to attract business and industry that pay living wages.

Barriers to employment such as lack of affordable childcare, limited English speaking skills, and lack of training to secure higher wage jobs are key issues to be addressed to help Lynnwood residents improve their economic conditions and the quality of their lives.





## **Appendix A: City of Lynnwood Equity Mapping**





## **Appendix B: YWCA 2017 Stakeholder Survey Results**





## Appendix C: Community Conversations

The City of Lynnwood Human Services Commission and City staff attended a number of meetings that were already being held in the community to hear firsthand what some of the concerns were, what gaps exist, what the barriers are and to really try to understand what the City can do to help underserved and underrepresented populations. We felt that it was best to hear directly from people who are in need to figure out what could be done by going on “their turf” and not ours. We also invited a number of service providers to speak with the Human Services Commission about what services they provide and how we can work together to address issues (refer to Human Services Commission minutes).







## Appendix D: Key Informant Interviews

For this portion of our 2016-1028 Needs Assessment work, City staff in the Community Development Department contacted Snohomish County Human Services Department to obtain some of our key informant interviews. We were looking for information about inmates at the Snohomish County jail, specifically for information about those who are currently incarcerated with a Lynnwood address and/or who grew up in Lynnwood. Snohomish County staff worked in collaboration with the Snohomish County Sheriff's Department to interview 36 inmates during the Spring of 2014. The standardized interview survey included questions about their needs related to medical, dental, housing, mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, job training, transportation and other human services. Additionally, they were asked to identify barriers that they had experienced to receiving these services as well as their use of emergency crisis systems like 9-1-1 and the hospital emergency department. Inmates were also given the opportunity to provide recommendations on what might help them transition back into society upon release from jail.

Inmates were asked to identify services that they needed in the past year. The services most needed were dental care, medical care, safe and affordable housing and substance abuse treatment services. The next question

presented to the inmates was related to housing and homelessness. In 2015, inmates said these were the biggest issues for them:

- “had to share housing to be able to pay the rent/mortgage
- “had to live on the street”
- “had to live in a car”
- “had to move because [I] could no longer afford to pay [my] rent/mortgage

Recommendations from inmates about how society could help them transition back into the community were focused on the following:

- “[we need] more support groups and 12-step groups like Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous offered in the jail”
- “expanded/enhanced drug and alcohol treatment in the jail”
- “more parenting classes and groups offered in the jail”
- “a list of community resources that can be accessed upon release”
- “transitional services especially those focused on: finding a job with a criminal record, how to navigate the social services system and find services, and how to find housing”
- “no night releases to the streets from jail”

- “enough medication upon release and referrals to places that can provide affordable refills”
- “Department of Corrections (DOC) transportation to DOC office for check-in coupled with no night releases of DOC inmates”
- “clean and sober housing on release”

“I want to be productive and stop being such a failure but I don’t know what else to do when I get out. Maybe someone to talk to about those things?”

*Source: Snohomish County Human Services Department, 2016*

“Stop with the midnight releases. When you get out at night, there is nowhere to go and no one to help you. No one is waiting for you except your [drug] dealer. If he’s all you got, you will call him and then it will be right back in here.”

“Someone to talk to before we get out. It’s scary and overwhelming to get out of here ‘cuz you don’t know what to do or where to go.”

“How about a housing coupon or something? Especially if you are getting out at night. But you gotta make it for only like a day or two or else the dope boys will take advantage of them and then set up shop and start dealing out of the place. But just a couple of nights would be good just to help get you situated and get stuff figured out.”

“It would be nice just to have some counseling or someone to talk to in here about trying to figure out how you can stay clean when you get out.”